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FRESNO MAN CHARGED WITH THEFT AND POSSESSION OF STOLEN MAIL
Used "Fishing" Method to Steal from Collection Boxes

FRESNO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury returned a two-count indictment charging BENANCIO FIGUEROA, 46, of Fresno, with theft and possession of stolen mail.

The case is the product of an investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service.

According to Assistant United States Attorney James R. Terzian, who is prosecuting the case, FIGUEROA stole mail from United States Postal collection boxes in Fresno between April 12, 2008 through May 22, 2008, using a method known as "fishing." The "fishing" was accomplished by using a device manufactured with duct tape, books, straps, and glue. He would lower the sticky end of the "fishing" device into collection boxes, and pull out mail that stuck to it. On May 22, 2008, FIGUEROA was under surveillance by postal inspectors when he was seen stealing mail using a "fishing" device. He was arrested and is in now federal custody.

If convicted of the charges in the indictment, FIGUEROA faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

The charges are only allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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